

CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE FOR REGENERATIVE MEDICINE PRESS RELEASE: INDEPENDENT CITIZENS' OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE APPROVES POLICY ENHANCEMENTS Staff to Present Final Refinements to ICOC in August

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IRVINE, CA – The Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee (ICOC) of the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) this morning approved policies designed to establish model standards—in partnership with the Legislature and the public—for the CIRM and stem cell research.

"After the ICOC's meeting in Sacramento just last month, we are very pleased with our enhancements. We remain grateful for the support of Senators Perata, Speier, and Dunn and the leadership of Ortiz," said ICOC Chair Robert Klein. "Senator Ortiz has committed intense energy and passion to this important task of ensuring that California has the highest and best public transparency, conflicts provisions, and legislative oversight of any state or federal program in our nation. This is an ongoing process and we will continue to listen to the input of the legislature and the public to ensure the finest standards for medicine, ethics, and competitive peer review in every aspect of our stem cell program."

Zach Hall, Ph.D., the Interim President of the CIRM, said a number of the standards that the Legislative Subcommittee recommended at its June 20th meeting surpass the stringency of the National Institutes of Health and University of California standards.

The ICOC approved the following policy enhancements:

- broadening conflict of interest provisions for working group members;
- providing earlier public availability of working group funding recommendations;
- requiring comprehensive reports to the State Legislature summarizing grant awards and recipients;
- ensuring increased public access to meetings of the Standards Working Group and the Facilities Working group;
- and providing public access to the Grants Working Group, except for discussions related to scientific and medical evaluations of grant applications and other mission critical exceptions.

CIRM staff is expected to make refinements for the board's consideration at the August meeting to address additional points, including:

- Making the conflict of interest policies for the working groups consistent with respect to financial threshold and family members (\$5,000);
- Including a threshold of financial interest held in private companies;
- Providing a lay summary of those grant applications that do not come to the ICOC with a recommendation for funding at that time of submission;
- Addressing intellectual property in good-faith discussions and negotiations with the Legislature about how to best address this goal. To implement this last goal, the ICOC voted to establish a Task Force of ICOC members to work with the Legislature on an intellectual property policy, specifically including the goal to advance access to therapies for low income Californians.

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